1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

593 wives and thus lead to frequent divorce. In such circumstances a close intimate relationship between husband and wife is a victory of personality over social and cultural conditions in the society.

Other Family Relations and the Behavior Norms

593 602 571 829 867 To the Kanuri themselves, family relations—those between parents and children, between siblings, uncles and nephews, grandparents and grandchild, between one in-law and another and so on—are part of a larger framework of behavior governing almost all the important relations between persons and groups in the society. The Kanuri believe that these relations originate in the family where the person first learns them and are then extended outwards to include all of the important social relations of adult life. From the anthropologist's point of view it is impossible to say which comes first. Do the family relations create or cause those social relations which best suit them, or does the society outside the family create the kind of family relations required by the society at large? Whatever the answer, the Kanuri are quite clear on this point. They believe that the rules governing social relations in the family and household are the essential guides to the successful operation of the larger scaled organizations in the economic and political life of their society. Thus many social relations in Bornu have a kin-like quality or are spoken of using the idiom of kinship, even though the persons involved clearly recognize that they have no kinship with one another through genealogical, descent group, or affinal relations.

593 571 577 The most important of these relations is the *bərzum* or discipline-respect relationship closely modelled on, and usually spoken of in terms of, the father-son relationship. In this relationship a father gives his son protection, security, food and shelter, a place or status in the community, an occupation, helps him to arrange a marriage, and represents him in the adjudication of disputes. In his turn the son must be completely loyal, obedient and subserviant to his father, and work for him [861] in whatever way the father feels is necessary. This respect is so demanding a mode of behavior in families that young children are sometimes sent away to a relative's household, usually to a grandparent, and return as one infomant put it, "when they [602] understand respect." When the father dies, an older brother or a paternal uncle may take the place of the father as head of the household. He then receives the same respect from the dead man's children. This is so because they are older men with authority in the household. Thus all senior relatives, older siblings, and paternal uncles receive respect, and although it may not have the intense quality of the father-son relationship to begin with, everybody knows they may have to treat such a [867] person as if he were a father under certain circumstances. Besides this, a young [561] child is taught that in general older people are to be respected, no matter what their sex or degree of relationship to oneself. Other persons in society are indicated as being "like your father" or "greater than your father" in the amount of discipline and respect that they require. Religious specialists, political leaders, and any compound head with whom a person is staying are all in this category. In other words, the father-son behavior norm is the model used by the people themselves to describe the nature of all authority relations in the society.

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

mutters "yes, yes, yes" while his superior is talking but keeps his eyes cast downwards; to very powerful superiors like the Shehu he must not talk directly at all, but to an intermediary. Wives of such persons are treated like senior in-laws. Indeed, given the traditional practice of giving wives to clients, often from among one's own daughters, it is quite possible that the wife of a superior will one day become the mother-in-law of a client subordinate.

As a person grows up in his family, he also learns that there are some people with whom he can have very permissive relations. The ideal person is a grandparent, although a similar relationship exists between a spouse and all of his younger in-laws. A young boy can go to his grandfather's house and take things, pull his grandfather's beard, and generally misbehave, all the while receiving only a pat on the head for such licentiousness. Sex differences do not count here although there is sexual joking especially in the relations between a person and a junior in-law of the opposite sex. Later in life young boys and girls learn that such joking (*suli*) is a special form of interaction that can also be carried out between traditionally competitive occupational groups and traditionally hostile ethnic groups. On an individual basis one person in such a relationship calls the other "grandson" and the "grandson," being the younger, calls the older man "grandfather." The Kanuri explain that this helps to alleviate any tensions which may develop between the persons in such groups who are natural competitors or by tradition hostile to one another.

Finally, in the extended family and the household a young person grows up with brothers, sisters, and cousins who are also called siblings. The closer the age and interests of "siblings" of the same sex, the greater the solidarity and friendship. During childhood the young person usually chooses a young age-mate from amongst his siblings or cousins as his *ashirmanzə* or "secrets man," the person who knows his most intimate thoughts, hopes, and fears. Later in life, he chooses other *ashirmanzə* from inside his kinship network and outside it. He learns the faculty of intimacy, however, in his youthful friendships in the family and the household.

The family and the household then are orbits in which ways of behaving are learned and these characteristic norms of behavior are used for wider-scale social relations throughout the individual's life. At the core of these relations is *bərzum* discipline-respect. As well shall see, Bornu is an interwoven set of economic and political hierarchies, and this relationship of *bərzum* serves as the chief mechanism for the proper functioning of these complex relations between superiors and their subordinates.

The Household

Kinship may form the biological and the behavioral basis for Kanuri society, but it does not provide a place for such relations to operate. The Kanuri live in cities, villages, and hamlets and the basic unit of organization in these settlements is the household, rather than the family or any set of kinship groups. Even though these may be synonymous in some cases, in many compounds family and household are certainly not the same, and the distinction is fundamental to an understanding of the society. Furthermore the household, or compound as it is sometimes called, is stable in comparison to the family. The family can be split, and

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

553 it refers to a family event, such as Gambo, "the person who was born after twins." Names, then, reflect many of the social relationships and social circumstances of the individual being named and his relationship to those around him. However, the main point of the naming ceremony is quite clear. As one Kanuri put it,

> We celebrate the naming because the child and the family are fortunate; the infant has escaped death and entered successfully into life; it is therefore a joyful occasion.

Infancy

858 For the first eighteen months of his life a child is referred to exclusively as *tiful* or new-born infant without anyone referring to its age. The period marks the beginning of the infant's membership in society and its most obvious sign is breast-feeding. Perhaps the best single word to describe the infant period is that of "introduction," for during these first few months the baby is introduced to the family, to friends of the family, the neighborhood, the ward, indeed to the community as a whole.

152 867 593 [825] Any jealousy or antagonism felt towards the new baby by its older brothers and sisters is recognized as such and dealt with firmly but gently. Even cats are supposed to be jealous of new babies and are prevented by adults from coming near them. Very often an older brother or sister is sent away from the house to a nearby compound during the period of the birth, especially if there is a grandparent living close by. On the day of the naming ceremony all the older children in the family up to the age of ten receive little gifts in honor of the occasion. At one ceremony we saw a little boy of two and a half being brought back from the grandparent's house where he had been living for about a week. He was brought to the new infant and told, "This is our new baby. Be kind to him and look after him." All the children of the household were given little gifts that same day and told the same thing. After the ceremony was over many of the women in the compound devoted some time to playing with the children and showing them affection. Everyone pointed out repeatedly what a fine thing it was for the children to have a new brother in the family. If during the next few weeks the older children should show any signs of hostility they are sent away again to another compound for periods up to a month or two. At this new compound they are told again and again about the necessity of showing affection and being responsible for younger brothers and sisters. In other words, "sibling rivalry" is understood, anticipated, and dealt with in a way that reduces tensions and calmly recognizes the normality of an older child's jealousy when all attention turns to a new baby in the family.

[431] [431]

854 593 The new infant spends most of its first eighteen months with its mother. However, short sorties with older sisters occur now and then. On the other hand, the father has very little to do with the child at this stage, although he often comes by to see it. The baby soon learns to sit quietly while it is swaddled in a straddling-sitting position on its mother's back. Toilet training at this stage is minimal. The 863 mother, rather than the child, tries to learn when the child is likely to urinate. At first the child is merely wiped clean by the mother, but as soon as it can sit up, it is placed astride her ankles with its back resting on her upturned feet. A little hole is

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

dug in the sandy soil between the ankles and the infant then has a simple and comforting toilet ready made for it by the mother. Afterwards its loins are washed and the hole covered up with sand. During the entire infant stage breast-feeding is carried on easily and simply upon demand by the infant for the breast. Indeed the breast is generally used as a pacifier.

A typical scene in a mother's hut illustrates the way in which the introduction of a new baby to society is carried out. The mother and her friends sit around chatting and they pass the baby around, dandling it in turn, although the baby remains with the mother for a large part of the time. A very common topic of conversation at such times is, quite unsurprisingly, the new baby. But unlike a similar group of American ladies most of the talk is *to* and not *about* the baby. The mother and many of those present tell the uncomprehending infant in sing-song voices about its kindred, "So-and-so is your father, so-and-so is your brother, so-and-so is your sister," and so on through a vast complex of kinship links on both the mother's and the father's side of the family. The infant is also told in the same way about its neighborhood, its section of the town, or its village, its political leaders, and so on. "So-and-so is your village head, so-and-so is your district head, and this is your tribe and this is your emirate, and this is your *Shehu*, and so-and-so is your Waziri." The family occupation is also mentioned and how soon the infant is going to help in such-and-such activities around the compound and grow up into successful adulthood within the framework of all the associations and expectations that are referred to constantly.

Why tell a baby about its social connections, occupational expectations, political affiliations, and so on? Certainly later on, when it can understand a little more of the language, such talk is a means of initiating it into the social groupings of the society. However at this stage another function is performed. The child is a new member of the society, and it is being introduced into and given a recognizable place in its social setting. The new member means new relationships. So-and-so who did not have a younger brother's son, now has one; someone else now has a new cousin and perhaps a future spouse; or someone else now has a sister's son or an additional one. The coming of the *tiful* or infant creates changes because a new member has been added and in introducing it to society people are asked to shift their understanding of the organizations which now must include this new member. By constantly referring to these new relationships during the infant's first few months people close to the family affirm to themselves and finally to others the fact that many relationships are different now that the new baby has arrived safely.

As far as training goes, the *tiful* is too young to be very harshly dealt with or to be told not to do this or that. Its primary task is to survive and grow into a useful, law-abiding, member of its community.

Childhood

Infancy ends as weaning begins, about the end of the eighteenth month although a good deal of variation exists in actual practice so that many are weaned earlier. In general weaning is carried out with a matter-of-fact attitude as if to say,

1:- Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

"This is just a common, everyday matter," and should not be thought of as giving anyone any trouble. When difficulties do arise an older woman of the compound or the family offers her breast as a pacifier. In the odd case where this does not succeed pressures tighten up. The breast is referred to as "dirty" or specifically as "excreta" and in extreme instances bitter grounds of leaves are put on the breast and the lesson is very quickly learned.

After weaning, pressures are slowly brought to bear to teach the child proper ways of living among its people. Thus, as soon as a child can totter, the adult woman in whose hut he is sleeping starts to enforce the rule that he or she should go outside to perform toilet functions, stoop over with knees bent and buttocks near the ground using only the left hand for any attentions necessary to elimination. Later on as language skills develop the importance of the left hand is more highly emphasized as well as the advisability of being discreet about toilet functions. After the age of two and a half or three, scolding gets more intense and the child is told it is dirty or bad for urinating on the floor. Naturally the severity of the training depends to a large extent as well on the particular situation, the mood and personality of the mother, or other socializing agents present, as well as the age of the child. Thus a grandmother was observed who was not overly excited when her two-year-old grandson urinated on the floor, but she became quite angry when he wet her bed.

Patient but continuous teaching by adults in the household is a constant part of everyday activities for the young child. The following excerpt from field notes tells its own story:

> A plate of food is on the floor of the hut gathering flies. The grandmother says to her little grandson, "Kachella, pick up the plate. Now, take it over there. Be careful, there is food on the plate. Now, take that other plate and cover the food over. (Plates are made of grass.) That's right, very good." This simple operation which would have taken the grandmother a few seconds has been carried out after two patient minutes of instruction to the child who could not yet speak more than a few words.

Childhood also ushers in the establishment of sex roles. Boys are now called "small boys" and girls are "small girls" or "three heads" referring to the three-pronged hair style of prepubescent girls. Boys and girls wear different clothes and begin fairly soon to associate with members of their own sex and to carry out chores that are specifically for boys or for girls. In play groups based on sex they wander freely about the village or neighborhood of the city gathering like flies to honey at the slightest hint of any excitement, and wandering further afield from their own compound as they get older. The girl comes quickly under the authority of the women of the household especially her own mother if she is brought up at home. She learns the intricacies of preparing food, carrying water, and the ever-present task of grinding millet either at a quern or by pounding it on a large wooden mortar. The boys begin to gather firewood, help with the farming, run messages, gather grass for a horse if there is one, tend the goats and sheep of the compound, and learn the family dry-season occupation. Pressure to learn these skills is slow but definite. Punishments are rare, but severe. The child is beaten with a rod or whip until neighbors and friends succeed in persuading the parents to cease or desist. Reasons given for the beating often concern the sudden, or con-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

tinual dereliction of some duty although outright malfeasance such as stealing can also bring swift and awesome retribution. For example, a young boy was beaten for continually omitting to gather grass for his father's horse. This is a skill that a boy should acquire by the age of six or eight, possibly nine at the very latest. When punishment occurs its severity is noted by all children within earshot, and thus the beating of one child of the village or ward serves notice on all that punishment is not just a matter of threats but may become a reality if limits are transgressed.

That such household learning soon becomes habitual can be seen any day in a Bornu village by watching children. Even a little girl of three and a half can accomplish tasks involving quite a lot of dexterity. One little girl of this age was passed a straw mat plate and separately given some paper clips. She neatly put the paper clips on the plate and began her own already advanced imitation of the quick, deft, jiggling movements associated with the sifting of ground-nut shells. None of her paper clips was dropped, and she soon passed the plate back saying, "Here are some sifted ground nuts."

Sometimes play takes in both sexes and is more complex than simple imitation like the one above. Thus for several days a large group of young children from the age of five through ten may organize a "wedding." The "bride" and "groom" are chosen as are the various kindred, the best man, the leading woman, etc. Care is taken to practice as many of the details of the adult virgin wedding ceremony as they can manage including even a mock impregnation, in this case with a small doll. Wedding foods in miniature are passed around to the adults who accept the mock food with a show of seriousness although they may comment on or question some detail of the ceremony carried out mistakenly or omitted by the children. Adults expressed satisfaction with this type of play and remarked on its instructive value for the children. Such play is related to an even more complex form called *mai-mai*, which is no longer practiced in Bornu. In playing *mai-mai* the young children in a village put on a pageant. They chose a king, nobles, servants, slaves, wives, gave titles to everyone, and behaved for several days in the guise of these socio-political roles. Mock battles were fought, slaves taken and justice meted out in a mock court. Seniority was established by age and consent. The organization was temporary like the "wedding" and disbanded after a few days. During periods when adults are out of the compound, away at a market, or working in the fields during the growing season, children often play house. The group gets together and appoints "fathers," "wives," and "children." The little children may actually cook for their "husbands" on such occasions and the couples go into a hut in the compound where sexual play is carried on. They are, however, soon called back to the larger group where it has been declared "morning" by another child who has announced the "morning prayers" signifying that night has passed. Boys are aware that such play should stop when they can ejaculate. From then on they are men; sex is a serious affair and unmarried girls are illegitimate objects of sexual intercourse. However such prepubescent sex derived from playing "house" is widespread, or to paraphrase one young informant, "Everyone does such things when they are young."

Boys especially, but girls as well, may also begin some religious instruction during their childhood. Although girls never leave home for this purpose, boys sometimes do after the age of six or seven. In some cases the teacher lives nearby

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

and the boys go there to learn their prayers and the beginning of Islamic theology. In some cases, especially with girls, the instruction is taken in the household itself. During adolescence this training may become more serious, and boys who were not sent to live with their religious teachers before may go off to learn Islamic practices in greater detail. The relationship of a boy to his *mallam* or religious teacher is expressed in the saying, "Your mallam exceeds your father." In other words, a boy's religious instructor exceeds his father in fatherly qualities and he must be respected and obeyed as a superior whose authority is unquestioned.

Whether a child goes to live with his religious teacher or not, there are other important factors that maintain for him a high turn-over among household members that is in striking contrast to the norms of western society. No matter where he lives in Bornu there is a high divorce rate and the possibility that his mother and father will not live together all their lives is very great indeed. Children stay under the control of their father in his household, although some contact with the mother is maintained and remains a strong emotional bond for many, even though there is a constant possibility that it cannot remain a household relationship. High divorce also means that the mother's co-wives are continually changing and that one's own half-siblings may be without their own mother in the compound so that compound relationships themselves are continually shifting and changing throughout a person's childhood.

The Kanuri also practice fostering. In some cases children are given to grandparents, or friends, or other relatives to be raised. Sometimes the reasons are political, and the parents try to place the child in a very important person's household so that the child may grow up knowing and associating with people who can help him later on in life. Sometimes it is felt to be a kindness towards a friend or to the child's grandparents. Whatever the reason, the child lives during his early years in a compound other than that of his own parents. It is possible to find Kanuri who have lived in as many as four or five compounds by the time they reach adolescence, and two or three is quite common. On the other hand, there are also many people—especially in rural areas where their work is needed—who were raised in only one household. One informant reported how he was given to a father's younger brother at weaning, given to a religious teacher at six, returned to his father at the age of eight, then put into the household of the district head when he was thirteen. Although there is much variation in this practice, in conjunction with the high divorce rate as well as the always present possibility of sudden death by disease, it means again that the actual people in the younger person's relational network are many, many, times more fluid and changing than is the case in western society.

Summing up this very important point, we may say that it is a rare Kanuri who has passed through childhood with a stable set of interpersonal relations to siblings or adult members of his household. This means that in child training the relationships to specific persons are not stressed as much as the norms of behavior we spoke of in Chapter 3. The one important exception to this is the relationship to one's mother which is particularly strong between a mother and her son. This fits nicely into the life cycle of women who, as we shall see, usually return to their son later in their old age to take up the role of old, unmarried women. In stressing the norms of behavior rather than particular relationships, it is respect and obedience

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

to seniors, first in the household then in the society at large, that is the most important social learning of childhood. Kanuri society is hierarchical. Whether the person is in one compound or another, one social situation or another, there is always one common feature—rank and its determinants, power and authority. By living in several compounds, by seeing authority at work in the community, and by learning to generalize his response to authority, the young child learns to respond easily and gracefully to many combinations of rank and position. His counterpart in western society may be learning how to cope with the intricacies of modern urban technology, but he would certainly be no match for his Kanuri counterpart in the diplomacy necessary in dealing with superiors.

Puberty

Puberty is not an age-grade in the same sense as childhood or adolesence. Yet it deserves some special attention because it is a marker that separates these two life periods and creates a means for very important transitions especially for young girls. Sometime between the age of twelve and fourteen most girls undergo their first marriage. Boys on the other hand begin their adolescence. This is a more carefree time for them than the period of intense training for adulthood that a girl is suddenly confronted with as she moves from childhood into her teenage period and marriage.

However there are no absolutely sharp breaks even for a girl. A newly married young girl is not considered totally grown-up and sometimes she continues to wear her hair in the childhood style. If she divorces during this early period, usually the first three or four years after her first marriage, people often speak of her as *njim suri* or one who is only beginning to become a woman but who has not completed the change-over to full adultlhood.[1] At first the young wife still sees many unmarried childhood friends who will soon be getting married themselves. They visit her when she is confined to the house for varying periods depending upon how secluded her husband wishes his wife to be. Only gradually over the period of the first year or so of marriage does the young girl begin to participate fully as a wife. From the first she cooks food regularly because it is her duty and her right, and as time goes on she is seen more and more in the company of the older, adult women of the compound and the neighborhood. If she is not in total seclusion, like most rural wives, then she can be seen going with the women to the well or the market, and to women's festivities in the village.

Although rare it sometimes happens that a girl misses the opportunity to marry while still in her early teens. Leaving aside the very few girls who go on in school, such cases are rather tragic. The girl is either mentally deficient or a disturbed person, or one who people say has been having love affairs before marriage. In such cases she changes her hair style in her middle to late teens and takes on the role of a single divorced woman seeking a new husband and therefore open to courtship and sexual liaisons with men.

In Magumeri one young girl about fifteen or sixteen who was well de-

[1] Literally *njim suri* means to have seen inside the hut, that is she has been alone with her husband but only seen or glimpsed at the activities of adulthood not really practiced them in full.

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

883 868 571 159 305 592 [304] barber and still carries out special chores for his former master. He also claims that he gives the senior barber about fifty percent of all his present receipts. As yet he does not know how to cut face marks, remove the uvula, or perform circumcisions, and so he attends all of these ceremonies with the master barber so that he may continue his education. He hopes that by the next year he will be allowed to perform some of these more advanced operations under supervision. When he has completely finished his education, it will not be necessary to do any chores for the senior or give him any commission. Nevertheless the former apprentice should always pay his respects to his ex-master and give him gifts from time to time.

883 868 571 592 834 Other apprentices living with strangers claimed they felt more freedom in the household of the stranger and thus live away from home for their training even though they practice the same craft as their father. Many said that they would return home eventually but for the present it was pleasant to travel around seeing other parts of Bornu. This freedom refers more specifically to their sexual activity or at least to its discussion since the discipline and respect given to the compound head is the same as elsewhere. However many boys discussed sex in front of the compound head while such behavior would be impossible in their natal family households. Some boys reported that their father was dead and they had been sent off by their families to the household of relatives or friends in order to learn an occupation.

882 867 105 In summary, adolsecence sharply divides men and women. A young girl takes on her role as a married woman and it is within marriage that she completes her education for adulthood in Kanuri society. A woman may divorce later on as indeed most do, then remarry and bear children throughout. However the framework of adult life is entered into at a first marriage sometime around puberty. For the boy, on the other hand, adolescence is a socially recognized state in life entered at circumcision. This stage of life is used to complete the young man's education and equip him with the interpersonal and occupational skills that are required as an adult and a potential family head.

Maturity

885 192 The mature man is described by the Kanuri as *rashidi*. Ideally this implies that he is married, has a compound of his own and an occupation, the use of some land for farming, and a recognized position in the community as the head of a compound. It also means that he has a certain degree of independence so that if he wished he could move of his own accord to another community. To be a mature man par excellence, he should also have children and the reputation of a person who does things discreetly and diplomatically. Maturity is not simply a term applied to a period of life. It is also a value judgement describing a proper and desirable behavior of an adult man. It is not just a role but an evaluation of that role.

885 Most people seemed unable or unwilling to answer the question of age in relation to maturity, and so they fell back on marriage claiming that any married man was in fact a mature adult. However a few, notably high ranking people, did give an age and suggested that a person could not be thought of as being fully mature until he was at least thirty-five, very often forty. After this age he is not sup-

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553 602 their respective kindred and in-laws. There is no rule about which group should take precedence although the comparative social status of the patrilateral and matrilateral kin seems to be a major factor in the decision. Informants claimed that the child must be taken away from his grandparents some time before puberty and brought under the direct control of his parents so that he (or she) may learn proper respect (bèrsum) because there is no bèrsum, they said, when there is much suli. Table I indicates that this latter judgment is only an approximation to the overall pattern since 14.9% of all responses by ego to grandparents indicate the presence of some respect (bèrsum) behaviour. As a general rule the reciprocality of the joking relationships between alternate generations of the kinship system, extending to include the third ascendant and descendant generations (the ysiya) follows a pattern of more respect between ego and his grandparents and more freindship and fondness between ego and his grandchildren.

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It is not uncommon to see a grandparent visiting his or her friends always in the company of their little joking partners. As the friends sit down to chat of the latest gossip of the day, the grandchild plays nearby, then comes over and nestles in the grandparent's arms, pulls at articles of dress on his person, or pulls at grandfather's beard, and acts generally in a quietly affectionate manner. The observer is struck more with the genuine fondness and affection of the relationship, at its early stages, than with its so-called joking content. As the child grows older the joking aspect becomes more noticeable. The grandparent will point out a young playmate of the opposite sex and say to him -

553 Generally speaking, Kanuri names are passed on through alternative generations. Ideally a man and his wife take turns obtaining names from each of their descent groups. Some men insist that boys be given names from the patrilateral group, while allowing girls to be named after the mother's relatives. As we have seen, a parent may name his child after some high status person thus establishing what is hoped will be a fruitful namesake relationship. 551 There is a non-reciprocal name avoidance between ego and his parents, parents-in-law, and high status persons in general. In order to avoid using a name the parents give the child, a nickname which usually indicates his relationship to the person whose name he bears. [553] Thus many young boys are called Aba gana (small father) or just Aba (father) which indicates that they have been called after the father of one of their parents.

Infancy

858 For the first eighteen months (lunar) the child is referred to exclusively as a tiful (infant, baby) regardless of its sex. This period marks the beginning of the individual's incorporation into society. Its criterion is breast feeding. In social rather than individual terms the period is one of introduction. The infant is introduced to its family, to the friends of the family and 858 to its community. Sibling rivalry is recognized and dealt with 867 gently but firmly. The Kanuri believe that a sibling, especially one who shares one or both of his parents with the new arrival, may exhibit antagonism towards the baby. Very often the older sibling is sent off to a nearby compound, usually to a grandparent, for the period of the birth. It returns to receive gifts from the parents

858 on the day of the naming ceremony. This is believed to apply only
867 to young children under the age of five or six; older ones are sufficiently socialized so that rivalry presents no overt problem. At one naming ceremony a small girl of two and a half was observed being brought back from her namesake grandparent's compound where she had been living for the last week. She was admonished upon presentation to the new infant, "This is your new baby —— be gentle with him and look after him." Both the little girl and her full brother aged nine or ten had been given small gifts that day, she, two little glass bangles, and he, a new shirt. Later, after the naming ceremony was over, many of the women in the compound devoted some time to playing with and showing affection to the two elder siblings and pointing out to them what a fine thing it was that they had a new little brother.

854 The new infant spends most of the nursing period with its mother although short sorties with elder female siblings occur now and then. The father although he sees the child often interacts very little with it. The infant learns very soon to sit quietly on the back of its mother while it is swaddled comfortably to be carried about. Toilet practices are simple at this time. At first the child is merely wiped clean by the mother. However, as soon as it can sit up, it is placed facing the mother, astride her ankles and with its back resting on her upturned feet. A little hole is dug in the sandy soil between the ankles and the child has a simple and comforting toilet ready-made for it by the mother. When the baby is finished, the mother washes its genital regions and/or anus with her left hand and covers up the hole. Babies wear only a small

868 are transgressed.

868 857 Learning of adult skills is often accomplished through imitative play. A little girl of three and a half was passed a straw plate and, separately, some paper clips. She immediately put the paper clips on the plate as her mother would do in the preparation of food, and began her own approximation of the quick, deft, jiggling movement of sifting the shells of groundnuts. None of the paper-clips was dropped from the plate and she soon passed the plate back saying, "Here are some groundnuts."

857 867 Sometimes imitative play is more organised. A large group of children between the age of six to ten may organise a "wedding". One of the young boys is the groom and a bride is chosen, as are in-laws, best man, lead woman, etc. [864] Every detail of the adult virgin marriage ceremony is carried out, even to a mock impregnation, in this case a small doll. The wedding foods, in miniature, are passed around to the proper people, who accept the mock food with a show of seriousness. Adults thought this play was instructive and remarked that it was a good way for the children to learn the customs of the people.

794 793 Childhood is also the time of basic religious instruction which is more highly stressed for boys. Young boys may be given away any time after the age of six or seven to a Koranic mallam for a year or two, to live and travel with him, work for him, and live in abject poverty, in order to learn Arabic prayers, and some Arabic script. Their relationship to him while under his tutelage is expressed in the Kanuri saying "mallamnum abanum kozina" (your mallam exceeds your father). In other words, an individual's Koranic teacher exceeds his father in fatherly qualities, which means he must be given respect, obeyed and sub-

858 is considered too young to understand that it must not do this or that. Its primary task is to survive and feed at the breast while becoming identified as a new member in its immediate society.

867 After weaning (and perhaps adoption) the steady, inexorable process of socialization training is applied to the child. This childhood training teaches the young Kanuri slowly but with ever increasing emphasis the central importance of the behaviour norm. Especially is this true of bèrzum (discipline-respect) whose necessity and moral primacy the growing child is taught to understand and utilize. This means that the child is taught to shift and extend the culturally prescribed modes of behaviour from one situation to another, and from person to person. From the point of view of the individual, childhood 867 training results in a picture of society. Of major importance in this 571 picture or image of society is its personal diffuseness. The person learns that there is not necessarily a final or definite locus of power and authority residing in any particular person. Instead there is rank and status, and the individual learns to respond in a culturally prescribed fashion to many combinations and permutations of these role characteristics by applying the proper behaviour norms. This, in turn, prepares the individual to live in the adult world of Kanuri social relations in which there are multitudes of ranks to which he may be called upon to react.

561 By the end of childhood, as the Kanuri define it, which 867 means somewhere between the ages of nine to thirteen, the sex roles 882 and many of the accompanying behaviours have been learned. From this period onward, the development towards adult status is sharply dif- [582] ferentiated for males and females. Girls enter into their first marriage at this time, while boys begin the occupational training that